AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-23. (Canceled).

24. (Currently Amended) A method for <u>sending information in a multicast</u> <u>system by</u> selecting a value of one or more parameters of a timer function for use by a receiver for delaying feedback in <u>the multicast</u> a multicast system, the method comprising:

finding the one or more parameter values <u>of a timer function for use in a receiver</u> <u>to delay feedback in a multicast communication system,</u> which <u>parameter values</u> <u>minimize</u> minimise an expression defined as a function of the parameters, the expression comprising at least two terms, where one term relates to the expected number of feedback messages generated by receivers in the multicast system and the second term relates to the expected extra latency of the feedback due to the timer <u>function; and</u>

<u>sending information over the multicast system together with the values of at least</u> <u>one of the found parameter values.</u> function.

25. (Currently Amended) A method for <u>sending information in a multicast</u> <u>system by</u> selecting a timer function for use by a receiver for delaying feedback in a multicast system, the method comprising the steps of:

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for each of at least two timer functions <u>for use by a receiver to delay feedback in</u>

<u>a multicast communication system</u>, <u>minimizing</u> ~~minimising~~ with respect to one or more

parameters of the timer function an expression comprising at least two terms, where

one term relates to the expected number of feedback messages generated by receivers

in the multicast system and the second term relates to the expected extra latency of the

feedback due to the timer <u>function;</u> ~~function; and~~

comparing the values of the minimized expressions for the timer <u>functions; and</u>

<u>sending information over the multicast system together with at least one</u>

<u>parameter value corresponding to a minimized timer function expression.</u> ~~functions.~~

26.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, where the

expression further comprises a third term for weighting relatively the first and second

terms.

27.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, where the

second term has the form of a function having a maximum gradient corresponding to

the extra latency $E[M]$ being substantially equal to a predefined maximum acceptable

extra latency.

28.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 27, where the

second term has the form of a monotonic function increasing with $E[M]$.

29.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, where the

second term has the form:

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$$\Theta(E[M]) = 1 - \frac{1}{1 + \exp(\gamma(E[M] - E^0[M]))}$$

in which *E[M]* expresses the expected extra latency as a function of the timer function, and *E⁰[M]* is the maximum acceptable extra latency.

30.   (Previously Presented) A method of multicast transmission, comprising performing the method according to claim 24, and including within a multicast message the values of one or more parameters for the timer function and/or an indication of a selected timer function.

31.   (Currently Amended) A method of multicast transmission according to claim 30, further comprising the steps of:

monitoring multicast conditions during multicast transmission;

in the event that the conditions change in a predefined way, repeating the step of finding the one or more parameter values which minimize minimise an expression defined as a function of the parameters, the expression comprising at least two terms, where one term relates to the expected number of feedback messages generated by receivers in the multicast system and the second term relates to the expected extra latency of the feedback due to the timer function; and then

sending the recalculated values of one or more parameters and/or indication of a selected timer function in a subsequent multicast message.

32.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 31, where the multicast conditions comprise size the size of the group of receivers.

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33.   (Currently Amended) A method of multicast transmission, comprising:

repeatedly performing the method according to <u>claim 24</u> ~~any of claims 24~~ for

varying input multicast conditions in order to select a value of one or more parameters

and/or timer function associated with the input multicast conditions, where the

expression is defined as a function of at least one input multicast condition;

storing the selected parameter values and/or an indication of a selected timer

function in a lookup table together with an associated input multicast condition;

a sender transmitting multicast messages including values of one or more

parameters and/or an indication of a selected timer function which have been extracted

from the lookup table with reference to the associated multicast condition.

34.   (Currently Amended) A method of multicast transmission according to

claim 33, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

monitoring multicast conditions during multicast transmission;

in the event that the conditions change in a predefined way, extracting

information associated with the changed multicast conditions from the lookup table,

the information comprising values of one or more parameters and/or an

indication of a selected timer function; and

sending a subsequent multicast message including the extracted information.

35.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24 in which a timer

function is a shifted power-law (SPL) distribution function of the form:

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$$f_{SPL}(t) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{b}{T} + (1-b)\dfrac{a}{T}\left(\dfrac{t}{T}\right)^{a-1} & ; \quad 0 \leq t \leq T \\ 0 & ; \quad otherwise \end{cases}$$

in which both a and *b* are parameters and *T* is the timer period.

36. (Previously Presented) A storage medium carrying computer readable code representing instructions for causing a computer to perform the method according to claim 24 when the instructions are executed by the computer.

37. (Previously Presented) A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave and representing instructions for causing a computer to perform the method according to claim 24 when the instructions are executed by the computer.

38. (Previously Presented) A storage medium or data signal according to claim 34, where the instructions are also for generating a user interface via which a user can input one or more timer functions.

39. (Previously Presented) A storage medium or data signal according to claim 34, where the instructions are also for generating a user interface via which a user can input one or more of: information indicating the value of the weighting term; the maximum acceptable extra delay; an estimate of the size of a group of receivers; an estimate of the maximum transmission time between the sender and receivers.

40. (Previously Presented) Apparatus for performing the method according to claim 24.

41.   (Previously Presented) A multicast transmission system comprising apparatus according to claim 40.

42.   (Previously Presented) A multicast sender for operating as part of the multicast transmission system defined in claim 41.

43.   (Previously Presented) A multicast receiver for operating as part of the multicast transmission system defined in claim 41.

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